CUMORAH'S SOUTHERN MESSENGER

OCTOBER 1957

Vol. 32 No. 10

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"... the glory of children are their fathers"

—PROVERBS 17:6

NEW CONDUCTOR

AS the Tabernacle Choir began its 26th consecutive year on the CBS national radio network, a new conductor stepped to the podium.

After 22 years of leadership, which included the successful European tour by the choir, Elder J. Spencer Cornwall has been released from his responsibility. He has been succeeded by Elder Richard P. Condie, soloist with the choir and assistant conductor for nearly 20 years.

President McKay announced the change to the choir, and paid high tribute to the contribution made by Elder Cornwall during his many years of able conducting.

PAKISTAN VISITOR

"SOME Mormon missionaries so impressed me when I heard them in Hyde Park in London many years ago that when the State Department offered me this trip to America I accepted on condition that I be allowed to see Salt Lake City."

This favourable note was sounded last week in Salt Lake City by Qutubuddin Aziz, Karachi, Pakistan, editor of the United Press of Pakistan and president of the National Association of Journalists in Pakistan.

The young newsman was studying at Cambridge University in England when he visited Hyde Park and heard those "brilliant young men" (the Mormon missionaries) as they gave their street meeting on a "soap-box" in the famous park.

Two aspects of the Mormon religion particularly impressed Mr. Aziz. "First, the great spirit of sacrifice seems to be everywhere among you and, second, your code of morality—absolutely amazing," he remarked during his visit.

CONFERENCE CANCELLED

ACCORDING to word recently received in this office, the semi-annual General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which was to be held beginning October 4, has been cancelled. The report stated that the cancellation was due to the epidemic of influenza which is sweeping the western United States.

Considerable work had been done on Temple Square in preparation for the conference, including the construction of a new information booth. The Relief Society had planned to hold their conference in conjunction with the Church meet; and the Presiding Bishopric had planned to dedicate their recently constructed monument in honour of the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood.

Vol. 32 **Cumorah's Southern Messenger** No. 10

OCTOBER 1957

Editor: Glen G. Fisher.
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NOTICE:

All members and missionaries should note the change of the phone number at the mission headquarters.

THE TELEPHONE NUMBER OF "CUMORAH" IS NOW 698718.

In case of change of address notify mission office immediately.
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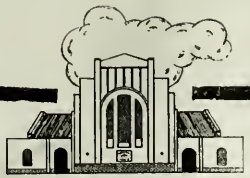
EDITORIAL



SEALED BOOKS?

from THE CHURCH SECTION
of the DESERET NEWS

CAN A PERSON HAVE A TESTIMONY of matters about which he is not informed?

Can a conviction of the truth of the Gospel come to any person without his knowing something about it—at least enough on which to found a testimony?

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans he said: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?" (Rom. 10: 13-15.)

The Saviour taught that if we would do his will we should know of the doctrine. (John 7:17.) But how do we learn of his will?

Moroni promised that a testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon would come to those who read it carefully and sincerely, and then seek a testimony in prayer. (Moro. 10:4.)

WE MAY HAVE THE SCRIPTURES in our possession, but if we never open them, what good are they to us? Can we obtain a testimony of them if we never read them? Will the Lord give us a testimony of a closed book?

How many who were born in the Church have testimonies of the truthfulness of the Gospel? It is true that the converts have testimonies, but what of the rest of us? Have we as sure a faith as the converts?

People who are converted to the Church through the work of our missionaries study the Gospel, read the scriptures, and seek out a knowledge of the truth for themselves. As they seek it, and pray for it, they obtain it.

BUT DO PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH go through the same type of process, or do they take matters for granted?

Many homes do not have a programme by which they teach their children the gospel in the home. They depend entirely upon the auxiliary organizations to teach and train their children in the faith. The result is that at times some never really are taught, they never grasp the significance of their Church membership. And if they do not, can we say they are converted?

Just as a convert must study and pray for a knowledge of the truth, so must those who are born in the Church. President Grant used to teach that he did not suppose that anyone was born in the Church with a knowledge of its divinity. He said that both he and his wife knew the multiplication tables, but none of his children were born with a knowledge of those multiplication tables. He pointed out that it is the same with the Gospel. No matter how well established in the faith the parents may be, their children are not born with this same faith and testimony. They must acquire it, just as other people do.

TO USE PAUL'S WORDS, "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

Every parent and every Church worker is or should be a preacher. In every home the Gospel should be taught, and taught from the scriptures. Every child should be taught to love the scriptures, and profit by their instructions.

They can never have a testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon if they know nothing of it, if they never read it. They can never have a testimony of the Bible if they never read it, nor of the other standard works of the Church.

Instructors in the Church and parents in the home must join in a concerted effort to have the youth of the Church obtain intelligent testimonies of the truth. This must be done by proper instruction, and who can say that we can properly instruct anyone in the faith without the use and knowledge of the holy scriptures?

Priesthood Page

A GIFT AND A RESPONSIBILITY

by

PRESIDENT GLEN G. FISHER

THE most important event in the history of the South African Mission was the visit in 1953 of President David O. McKay, and the subsequent organization of an Elders Quorum of the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood. Since that time unprecedented progress has been made, and as the male members have prepared themselves to receive and officiate in the priesthood, new life and power has been made manifest in all phases of church activity. Not only has there been greater activity, as evidenced by the erection of chapels, organization of new branches, increase in tithes and offerings, etc., by the records indicate a more fervant desire on the part of the members to live all of the principles of the gospel.

There can be no question about the power and authority of the priesthood and its effect on the lives of those who live worthy to receive its blessings.

As with most things in the gospel plan, the priesthood touches our physical as well as our spiritual life, and it is the prime purpose of a quorum organization to satisfy these needs. We might well ask the questions, "What are these physical needs and how does a priesthood quorum provide opportunity to give expression to them?" And again; "Is it possible, or practical, to combine man's physical existence with his spiritual life?" In answer to these questions let us consider the following observations:

"Man has ever felt the urge to socialize. From the beginning of time he has manifest tendencies in one form or another to congregate together." President David O. McKay in his book entitled "Gospel Ideals" makes this statement, "Man is a social being; God has designed him to be such. From infancy to old age he is dependent upon others for his development, education and happiness."

This has far deeper implications than we oft times realize. In many instances our priesthood activity is confined to a weekly meeting and we

A pleasing study of President and Sister McKay at Cumorah during their South African Tour.

A FIRM FOUNDATION

fail to appreciate or understand the intricate programme recommended for our quorum.

The Saviour has struck the key note in the commandment that was second in importance; "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Matt. 19:19) and correlated with it, the promise:

"In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my breathren, ye have done it unto me." (Ibid. 25:40) Another precept that has application here concerns "The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man."

Using these things as a foundation upon which to build a priesthood quorum, what a great fraternal organization we could have! Nothing would be lacking, providing the programme was carried out. Every righteous urge, both physical and spiritual would be satisfied. For this purpose priesthood quorums were organized. It is the one fraternal organization that is destined to bring about the true "Brotherhood of Man."

It is the duty of quorum Presidencies and Group Leaders to see that these ideals are carried out. There should be an adequate programme of activity, both social and spiritual. A real and sincere effort should be made to extend the hand of fellowship to all. Personal interest in our members has a wonderful effect

on them. The sick and the widows should be visited. Inactive members should be contacted and invited to attend their church duties. Priesthood members who find themselves in financial difficulties should be assisted, even to the extent of complete rehabilitation. Some worthwhile projects should be started and carried out to their conclusion.

A GREAT OBJECTIVE

Yes, a Priesthood Quorum has great potential. The Saviour said, "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." (Matt. 23:11).

President David O. McKay in a few well chosen words has put it this way:

"I look forward to the time when the membership of our quorums will approach their quorum meetings in anticipation of the brotherhood, and experience that fraternal feeling, which strengthens the soul and which inspires all to render greater service to their fellow men."

Elsewhere in the C.S.M. the President of our South African Mission Elders Quorum, Elder N. G. Muir, has outlined the objectives and the goals we hope to reach.

These objectives, when reduced to activity and works, will produce the very things that our Prophet envisioned for us.

In the South African Mission we have 119 members of the Melchizidek Priesthood, comprising one quorum.

What a great challenge for all of us, to make of this quorum a perfect example of fraternalism, loyalty, charity, devotion, tolerance, brotherhood, honesty, humility, and spirituality. It is only through the cultivation of these virtues and attributes in the hearts of men that wickedness and the satanic throes of war will be overcome.

"PREPARE YE"

Let it be remembered that the priesthood forms the very hub and foundation of God's Kingdom, which kingdom will eventually fill the whole earth. We invite all men everywhere to join with us in building up the kingdom and in the words of the Master Himself, we give solemn warning; "Prepare ye, prepare ye, for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh." (Doc. & Cov. 1:12).

As your Mission President, I extend the hand of fellowship to priesthood bearers throughout the mission. I am proud and happy to be associated with you, your wives and families in this . . . . "Marvelous work that has come forth among the children of men." (Doc. & Cov. 4:1).

The verse that follows gives us cause for serious consideration. "O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day. (Ibid. 2).

Finally to the faithful this promise is given. "They who receive the priesthood receive me, saith the Lord

> For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me;
>
> And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father;
>
> And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom, therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him." (Ibid. 84:35-38).

THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE FIRST QUORUM OF ELDERS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN MISSION

By President N. G. Muir

1. To impress the members of the Church with the fullness of their duty.
2. To foster an interest in salvation for the dead and Temple ordinances by the promotion of genealogical research.
3. To become better acquained with the doctrines of the Gospel through careful study and application of gospel principles.
4. To render regular service to the Church organizations.
5. To care for the welfare of each member of the quorum, and his family, in spiritual, intellectual and temporal means.
6. To engage in social activities as family groups, and thus develop a feeling of fellowship. faith and love among the quorum members.
7. To use the advantage every opportunity to preach and teach the Gospel, and to strengthen testimonies.
8. To raise funds that can sustain the quorum and promote its full duty.
9. To re-activate those bearers of the Priesthood who absent themselves from our midst.

The AIM of the quorum is to develop and foster the spirit of brotherly love. Every need of a member of the priesthood should be a concern of the quorum to which he belongs. The quorum, if it desires to magnify its opportunities and justify its existence, must develop its individual members for greater fitness as servants in the kingdom of God.

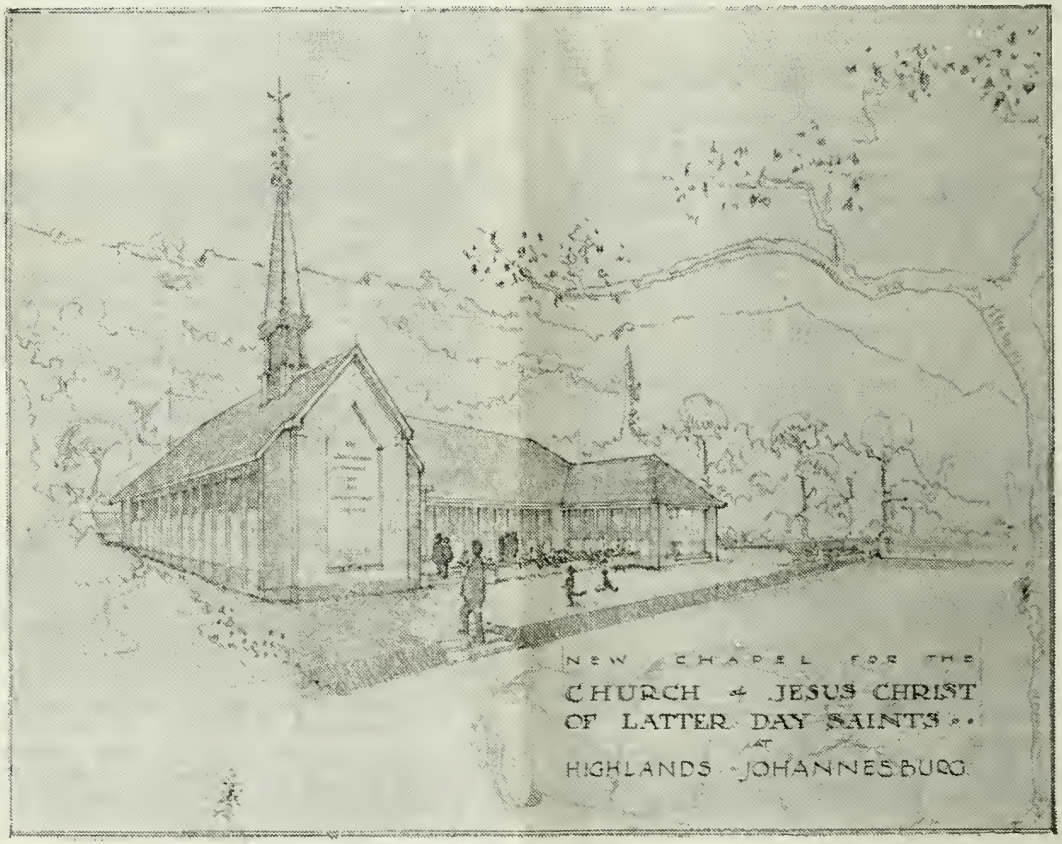
If a quorum thus assumes responsibility for each of its members, it follows that each member must dedicate himself to the tasks expected of his quorum. A man who has accepted the Priesthood, accepts with that gift an obligation to be loyal and faithful to the Church, the quorum, his Priesthood. his family, and to every principle of divine truth.

THE RAMAH BRANCH

OVER a hundred years ago, not long after the Holy Priesthood and the Gospel had been restored to the Earth through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the mission work of the Church started in South Africa, but it was only after the turn of the Century that the missionaries came to Johannesburg. Soon thereafter a branch of the Church was formed in the Golden City and meetings were held in the homes of the different Saints. Then in 1918, as the membership grew, a small shop situated on the Fordsburg Market Square was rented and converted into a meeting house and a home for the missionaries. But the locality of this place evidently proved unsuitable, for the venue was moved to a shop in Auret Street, Jeppe, nearer where most of the Saints lived.

As time passed and the membership grew, the need for a Church hall became pressing and a suitable site was chosen in Commissioner Street. Three missionaries, Elders Romney, Ballard and van der Einde, played a leading part in the planning and erection of the building, ably assisted by many of the local brethren, notably Dave Banfield and the late O. Hartmann and Leonard G. Muir. In October, 1924, the corner stone was laid by Mission President J. Wyley Sessions and it is believed to contain a copy of each of the Standard Works of the Church. It should be mentioned that the whole building was planned and built by the Saints and missionaries themselves without outside assistance.

As the years rolled by Ramah branch continued to grow while Commissioner Street became a busy outlet to the Eastern suburbs and the East Rand towns. Noisy trams and motor vehicles, not to mention the clanging fire engine from the Eastern Districts Fire Station just opposite, all pointed to the need sooner or later for a more suitable locality, when the time came to build a Chapel. Early in 1939, the Branch Presidency, under the leadership of Elder Evan P. Wright, initiated the search for such a site and in due course an option was taken over a fine site near the Kensington



terminus. The first Building Fund Commitee was then appointed to undertake the formidable task of raising the several thousand pounds that would be needed for the branch's share of the ultimate cost. The fund-raising effort has been going on continuously ever since.

The outbreak of World War II stopped, momentarily, the building plans. As mission activities resumed, so did the Johannesburg building drive. Many obstables had to be overcome, but in January, 1956, several proud saints met to break the ground in Highlands where their new chapel was to stand.

A farewell service was held in "Old Ramah" on May 19, 1957, and many fond memories were recalled. But eager saints held their first meeting in the new chapel the following week.

Much work is left to be done. Members are busy with the grounds and contractors this month started work on the tower.

Johannesburg Chapel Interior

STATISTICS

BAPTISMS

CLACK, Anita Elizabeth (Ramah), b. by L'Dean McCue, c. by Ray M. Stevenson, August 18th, 1957.

WALLACE, Lois Guss (Ramah), b. by Carlos W. Smith, c. Dan L. Chipman, August 18th, 1957.

WALLACE, William Francis Joseph (Ramah), b. by Dan L. Chipman, c. Carlos W. Smith, August 18th, 1957.

MILNE, Sylvia Jeanette (Ramah), b. Dan L. Chipman, c. Carlos W. Smith, August 18th, 1957.

MILNE James Ian (Ramah), b. Carlos W. Smith, c. Dan L. Chipman, August 18th, 1957.

LAPIN, Valerie (Durban), b. Charles I. van Coller, c. Derril C .Butler, August 25th, 1957.

WINSTANLEY, Percy Edwin Alfred (Durban), b. Derril C. Butler, c. Alan B. Harker, August 25th, 1957.

BLESSINGS

CLACK, Brian Alfred (Ramah), b. Kenyon V. Blackmore, August 4th, 1957.

CLACK, Peter James (Ramah), b. L'Dean McCue, August 4th, 1957.

OWEN, Debralee (Durban), b. Derril C. Butler, July 7th, 1957.

GILBERTSON, Michael Ian (Kitwe), b. Glen G. Fisher, August 26th, 1957.

Van ANTWERPEN, Daniel Johannes (Port Elizabeth), b. Irvin Burbank, July 7th, 1957.

LOUW, Gail Elizabeth (Krugersdorp), b. Larry K. Anderson, September 1, 1957.

FRANCE-BROTHERTON, Priscilla Anne (Pretoria), b. Joseph H. France-Brotherton, September 1, 1957.

MOODIE, Shirley Gail (Ramah), b. Wilfred S. Wrench, September 1, 1957.

MEYER, Margo (Ramah), b Kelvin M. Smith. September 1, 1957.

BIRTHS

NINOW, Gregory Don, son of Don R. and Gill N. at Johannesburg, 16th August, 1957.

RUTHERFORD, Norman Roy, son of Ray P. and Erma E. (Muir), Johannesburg, 5th August, 1957.

GILBERSON, Michael Ian, son of John and Ann (Wilson), at Kitwe, 20th August, 1957.

ORDINATIONS

GARTSIDE, Peter Stuart (Bulawayo), ordained a Deacon by Glen G. Fisher, September 8th, 1957.

DAUBNEY, Stanley Newberry (Bloemfontein), ordained a Priest by Sidney J. Spear, April 28th, 1957.

SPEAR, John Bernhard (Bloemfontein), ordained a teacher by Charles H. Spear, August 11th. 1957.

SPEAR, Brian Henry (Bloemfontein), ordained a Deacon by Sydney J. Spear, August 11th, 1957.

MILNE, Robert Lloyd (Bloemfontein), ordained a Priest by Sydney J. Spear, August 11, 1957.

MILNE, Pieter Andries Pretorius (Bloemfontein), ordained a Priest by Glen G. Fisher, April 28th, 1957.

BROWN, Christopher (Mowbray), ordained a Teacher by Theo. M. Rayner, September 15th, 1957.

RIX, Kenneth Albert (Mowbray), ordained a Teacher by Glen G. Fisher, September 15th, 1957.

SMITH. Richard Warrington (Mowbray), ordained a Teacher by Samuel J. Rayner, September 15th. 1957.

MARITZ, Willem Hendrik (Mowbray), ordained a Teacher by Gordon C. Terblanche, September 15th, 1957.

APPOINTMENTS

Elder John R. Hicken of Raymond, Alberta, Canada, was appointed mission secretary on October 8, 1957. He succeeds Elder E. D. LeBaron.

THE HIST
SOUTH AFR

FIVE years before Columbus discovered America a European sailor carefully felt his way along the African coast until he reached the southern tip. Within short years, braver mariners found that just around this fair cape lay an open route to the wealthy spice trade of the golden east. These sailors, rushing from the Indies with their costly cargoes, soon established the Cape of Good Hope as a stopping place to replenish food and water supplies.

First were the Portuguese, but their influence wanned, and in 1652 the Dutch East India Company sent Jan van Riebeeck with a company to open the Cape settlement as a "halfway" house on the busy trade route.

This was the start of the fascinating history of South Africa, which soon involved countless elements . . . the Dutch settlers, the French Hugenots, the German mercinaries, the Hottentots, the bushmen raiders, the Asian slaves, the British colonists and the Kaffir tribes.

Into the colourful and intricate fabric of this story is woven a small thread. Although generally unnoticed, this small element concerns the most important event in modern history and its effect in South Africa.

The First Home Missionary Work.

Just about the time that Britain granted Cape Colony representative government, and Dutch trekkers in the Orange Free State and across the Vaal officially formed their independent republics . . . just as the rugged colonists had ended their eighth war with the Xhosa tribes . . . three young Americans landed in Cape Town from a small ship. So insignificant was their arrival that it was four days before one kindly colonist finally offered them a meal.

Before the month was over, however, almost everyone in Cape Town knew about the three young Americans. They were "Mormon" missionaries . . . the first to come to southern Africa. They were ministers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, bearing the message of the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Their names were Elder Jesse Haven, Elder Leonard I. Smith and Elder William H. Walker.

As soon as they arrived the young missionaries sought permission to use the Town Hall for meetings. It was granted to them, on condition that they would pay for lighting. Arrangements were made, and meetings were advertised to run for six consecutive nights beginning April 25.

Elder Haven opened the first meeting with an address on the first principles of the gospel. He was followed by Elder Leonard I. Smith who bore strong testimony of the divine mission of Joseph Smith. The words of the elders so excited some of the listeners that the meeting ended in noisy confusion.

The next evening the missionaries found the City Hall closed against them. During the following weeks other halls were used, but mobbers and hecklers interrupted so often that it was impossible to preach. Echoing the feeling, local ministers delivered bitter lectures condemning the teaching of the elders. Oppo-

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sition was great, and, although friends were found who desired baptism, no one had courage to take a definite stand.

* * *

Finally, one true friend was found . . . Mr. Nicholas Paul, an influential man who lived in Mowbray. He permitted the missionaries to hold meetings at his home, warning audiences that if they did "not wish to listen they could leave, but the first man who offered an insult on his premises would be in danger of 'having more holes made through him than a skimmer.'"

For many weeks work was fruitless. On May 23 the three missionaries, amongst themselves, formed the first branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in South Africa. It was more than three weeks later that Henry Stringer of Mowbray was baptized by Elder Smith . . . the first person in southern Africa to accept the restored gospel.

A few days later, on June 23, Elder Walker baptized Mr. Nicholas Paul, their valiant friend. His wife and several other were baptized the next day.

After six months of heavy work the missionaries counted 45 new converts, organised into two branches. Books and tracts were shipped from England and the work of the Lord began to flourish.

* * *

One of the most successful communities for the missionaries was Port Elizabeth. Elder Smith began the work there. At first the members were so scattered that it was impossible to form a branch; but membership continued to grow and in a short period several branches were formed. At a conference held in Port Elizabeth on August 13, 1855, the Church in southern Africa consisted of three conferences, 6 branches and a total membership of 126.

One of the early converts in Port Elizabeth, George Frederick Watkins Kershaw, wrote a letter about this time to missionaries in England, requesting them to contact his father. He described the local situation in these words:

"The work of the Lord is going ahead in this district. We have here 10 baptised members and many more are investigating the truth, so much so, in all probability, our numbers will increase two-fold. Many of the Dutch farmers are investigating the truths. They are greatly scared by reason of the plague which is raging among their cattle, also the early appearance of the Locust which has destroyed the crops in the upper district, likewise the probable outbreak of the Kaffirs next Christmas. Surely the hand of the Lord is on this land. Elder L. I. Smith, whose labours and journeyings among them are unremitting, is generally very well received both by the Dutch and English. He preaches the Gospel as the only antidote for all their woes. The Lord is backing up the Message of His servants with unmistakeable argument.

"At Uitenhage, about 20 miles from here, Brother Henry Smith has held many interesting meetings. Of course, the accompanying persecutions have followed. One evening he had many of the head Ladies and Gentlemen of the place when a fellow broke a bottle of asafoitida in the room which caused such fumigation as to break up the meeting. At another time a volley of rotten eggs and turnips was hurled, but the Devil reckoned without his hosts to think that by such means he could put a stop to the work of the Lord. On our second meeting in this place I had my windows broken by a volley of potatoes. We had a mob of about 30 to 40 men and boys who amused themselves for about 2 hours, but it was no go."

This Elder Kershaw was called to go on a mission to the Isle of Maritius, a French colony along the east coast of Africa. He was successful in converting all but one of the crew on the boat that took him there, and he organized a small branch in Port Louis, principal city of the island.

* * *

With the message of the gospel came the spirit of gathering. Most of the new saints had strong desires to join with the stakes of Zion in the flourishing valleys of Utah. The seed of persecution had been widely scattered, though, and ship owners joined together in a refusal to carry "Mormon" emigrants. But the zeal of the new saints could not be suppressed. A convert from Beaufort, Brother Charles Roper (a man of over 300 lbs. in weight), travelled to Port Elizabeth. He was quite well-to-do, and when he could not obtain passage to America, he decided to buy a ship of his own. With the help of Brother John Stock (or Stark) of Port Elizabeth a £1,500 down payment was made on the "Unity," a 200 ton sailing vessel. The balance of the payment, £1,000, was to be paid on arrival in London.

The small craft was chartered to London with cargo. It sailed late in November, 1855, with Elder Walker, Elder Smith, and 15 emigrant saints.

On December 15 they were followed by Elder Haven's who left Cape Town with a small group of saints en route for Salt Lake City. Up to that time 176 converts had been made in the colony. For a short time the branches were left in the hands of local elders. Elder Edward Slaughter had charge of the Port Elizabeth Conference and Elder Richard Provis presided over the saints in the Cape Colony Conference.

* * *

In 1857 Elder Ebenezer C. Richardson was sent from the British Mission to preside over the Cape of Good Hope Mission. Elder James Brooks travelled with him. They arrived in Cape Town in the fall of that year. Though the presiding officers had worked faithfully, the branches were in unsatisfactory condition. The elders' task was hard, but before they left South Africa in the spring of 1858, the mission membership had grown to 243.

The urge to "gather to Zion" was still great. On March 9, 1859 about 30 converts sailed from Port Elizabeth aboard the barque "Alacrity." Their leader was Elder Joseph R. Humphries. They arrived in Boston on May 19 and travelled by train to St. Louis, Missouri. Other groups were organized and also emigrated in following months.

Three new elders were sent from America in December, 1861. This group included Elder William Fotheringham, Elder Henry A. Dixon and Elder John Talbot. They did extensive proselyting in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Pietermaritzburg, Grahamstown, Humansdorp, Winterburg, and other localities. Elder Dixon pioneered missionary work in Natal. His first convert was Brother A. H. Noon, a prominent sugar planter from Isipingo, 10 miles from Durban. Brother Noon's brother also accepted the gospel, and soon a small branch was organized.

But work was difficult. In September of 1863 Elder Dixon wrote this report from Pietermaritzburg: "South Africa is a hard country to labour in, and tries the constitution of men." He mentioned that his health was poor, and missionary work very difficult.

One by one the missionaries were called home. The last elder from Zion to leave, at that time, was Elder Minor G. Atwood. He had succeeded Elder Fotheringham in the presidency of the mission. In April, 1865, with a company of saints he left for Zion aboard the barque 'Mexicano." Some of this group had trekked by ox-wagon from Natal to Port Elizabeth to begin the voyage.

Just before their boat arrived in New York, Elder Atwood wrote a letter, describing some features of the trip:

". . . on board the vessel it was so arranged, that the brethren slept in one compartment and the sisters in another, and from the day our Company came on board, which was done without accident and with much harmony, we posted a sentry over the sisters' compartment at night. Elder Noon taking charge of the guard. I appointed prayer meetings in the men's compartment at half past six (a.m.) and in the sisters' compartment for all hands, about 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.

"We endeavoured to establish cleanliness and order, in which the brethren and sisters generally co-operated and on the whole I can say that our little company of 47 should have done well, and we have had general order, peace, and harmony, although we have never escaped without a few disagreeables.

"For instance, the bugs on board the ship which made their appearance before the saints came on board, multiplied so fast in the forward part of the vessel, as to drive the sailors out of the forecastle and the brethren out of their compartment compelling them to sleep on deck in all weathers, anywhere they could find a place to lie down."

The captain, though pleasant and friendly as the voyage started, later made himself quite disagreeable. Bad weather threatened the small boat several times, and the captain, at one time, expected a hurricane. But the Lord blessed the small company, and their entire voyage was on smooth water.

The journey was saddened by the death of Brother George Frederick Watkins Kershaw, the former missionary, who had acted as cook for the company. He left a wife and six small children.

These saints followed the well-worn pioneer trail across the American plains with the Captain Willie company of mule teams. They left for Salt Lake City so late in the season that President Brigham Young sent relief wagons to meet the party in Wyoming. The relief group brought fresh food supplies just as the mule-team company had run out.

Elder Atwood, as he left South Africa, had placed the branches in the hands of local elders. just as before. This time, however, it was over 40 years before the South African saints were agai nplaced in contact with Zion.

IN July 1903, Elder Warren H. Lyons, Elder William R. Smith, Elder Thomas L. Griffiths and Elder George A. Simpkins re-opened South Africa to missionary work for the Church.

A few members were found, still firm in their accepted faith. One was Elder George Buck, who had been left in charge of the Mowbray branch. He was 90 years of age, and the sole survivor of that branch.

Work moved ahead for the elders, and the first two converts were baptized in Table Bay. One of these converts was Samuel A. Martin, a young business man in Cape Town. In 1916 he sold his prosperous bakery business and moved to Ogden, Utah. In later years he returned to South Africa as mission president and did much to break down prejudice against the Church.

1918 Style. Elders Kroge, Stoddard, Robinson and Robins relax behind shop in Auret Street, Jeppe where services were once held.

In 1914 Elder Nicholas G. Smith was sent to preside over the South African Mission. In 1916 he arranged for the purchase of "Cumorah", the mission headquarters for these many years. He was also presiding in the mission when the 'flu' epidemic of 1918 ravaged the world. Some years later he described this awful event at General Church Conference in Salt Lake City:

"It was during the 'flu' time in South Africa. It was all over the world, in fact, in that terrible October of 1918. The war had been raging, the nations had been vexed, there had been pestilence and famine and earthquakes over the face of the earth — distress was everywhere . . . When the 'flu' struck Cape Town the first day they began to die in dozens. At the end of the first week five thousand people had died in that one city alone . . . The

coffins were all used up, the trains stopped running, the street cars stopped running, the stores closed, even the drug stores and we could not get medicine. They were laying people in trenches, aye forty and fifty. Wrapped in cloth they were laid on motor trucks, hauled out to the cemeteries and laid in trenches and covered without any caskets.

"I saw children dragging their parents' caskets along the street. I saw men with bodies thrown over their shoulders, carrying them off to lay them away . . . People were dying everywhere, and at the end of the second week 10,000 people died in that city alone. The saints came down with that dread disease —fifty-seven Latter-day Saints in the city of Cape Town had the disease, half of them spitting blood, and that was the sign of the end. I remember that it invaded the mission house— five of the missionaries were down . . . I remember Aaron U. Merrill of Cache Valley and I were the only two left upon our feet. How remarkable that two "Mormon" missionaries should have been left upon their feet! And I said to Elder Merrill, "Are you prepared to go with me through the city blessing the people?" He said, "I will go as far as I can." And so we set out.

"It did not do any good to knock on the door and wait for an answer, for in some homes they found eight people dead, lying around on the floor, some having crawled along the passageway to get to the kitchen to get a drink to quench their thirst, and they died there . . . The first door we came to was that of a "Mormon" girl who had married a non-"Mormon". He had promised her she could go to Church and do anything she liked if she would only marry him. After they were married he told her she could not go to those accursed "Mormons" any more. When we opened the door and walked into their house, he was standing at the foot of the bed, looking out of glazed eyes. When he seemed to recognize us, he said, "Get out of here!" I walked up and took hold of his arm, and saw his wife upon the bed, too weak to speak. Just then a neighbour came in, and said, "It is all right, gentlemen, the doctor left here an hour ago, and he says they will be dead in another hour. You may go on your way." Go on our way and leave a Latter-day Saint to lie there and die alone? We anointed her with oil and sealed the anointing, and lo and behold the Lord raised her up: but the man he took.

"And we went from door to door that day, and of the fifty-seven who had been smitten with that disease, every Latter-day Saint was healed. Not one died!"

In 1919 the South African Government barred elders from the land, and for two years President Smith carried on the mission work alone. After a great deal of counselling and petitioning, missionaries were once more allowed to enter South Africa. Soon, the Church enjoyed full recognition by the government, and was granted marriage officers and railway concessions.

A group who attended the dedication of "Old" Ramah in 1924.

President J. Wyley Sessions, in 1924, saw the elders and members plan and complete a small, but lovely, chapel in Johannesburg. It was named "Ramah". Several years later, in 1936, the saints in Cape Town erected a beautiful chapel and recreation hall, adjacent to the mission headquarters in Mowbray.

At approximately this same time "Mormons" and "Cumorah" became traditionally well-known names as baseball fever swept South Africa. Pioneered by President Don M. Dalton, the "Mormon" elders and local members formed baseball teams that are well remembered by sports fans.

Work in the mission was interrupted again during the Second World War. All missionaries were re-called, and most of the male saints joined the service of their country and were sent overseas. The mission president worked alone for several years before the war ended and normality was restored. Progress since then has been steady and satisfying.

Perhaps the greatest contribution to the mission progress was made by President David O. McKay when he toured South Africa in 1953. The saints had long dreamed of such a great experience. Most of the country was impressed by this stately prophet of the Lord and the work increased greatly.

President McKay granted the mission a further great blessing. After a study of the situation, the prophet granted the mission president the right to bestow the Priesthood according to his own discretion. Prior to that, all male members had to trace their genealogy out of Africa before they were granted the gift of the Priesthood.

Shortly after this visit a building programme was introduced. Springs was the first successful branch. Their lovely new chapel was dedicated by President L. H. Duncan in 1954. Port Elizabeth followed them, then Durban and finally Johannesburg gained a large new meeting place.

Progress in the mission was threatened once again in 1955. The South African government refused to grant visas to foreign missionaries of any denomination. This stopped American missionaries; but canadian missionaries, as members of the British Commonwealth, were allowed to enter and continue the work.

Local saints also helped to meet the challenge. From the branches many young missionaries answered the call, and began work in their own country.

And so, the work of the Lord continues. Each small step, each mission president, each missionary and each convert has helped in the growth. The record of that growth is a story of faith, courage and hard work. It is a challenge to be held in esteem, as a pattern to guide the future work.

The material for this history was taken, for the most part, from secondary sources. We have not credited these sources because of a lack of space. However, we would like to graciously thank Sister Muriel Barnes of Johannesburg, Brother Arthur Fagan and Brother C. A. Smith, both of Durban, for the help and information they provided.

BRANCH NEWS

RAMAH BRANCH

Meeting: 1 Hunter Street, Highlands, Johannesburg.
Branch President: K. B. Chater; phone 45-5575.
Branch Reporter: Dorothy Hamilton.

The branch held an extremely successful Gold and Green Ball. The theme was Spanish. Nola Matthews, Hilda Wallace and Jeniffer Tewson added to the Spanish flavour with the fine dancing and gay costumes. Sister May Ninow was responsible for the artistic decorations.

We are pleased to report that President Fisher has given permission to go ahead with our tower, and the contractors are busy on it now.

The municipality have put two new light standards in the parking area, making the car park much brighter and safer. The members are still working on the grounds and the junior Sunday School benches.

Swiss films of winter sport and travel were shown to us by Rev. Bucheler of the Swiss Reformed Church.

The MIA fireside this month was divided in two. The under 25 years listened to some classical recording. The over 25 group had a Bible Quiz organized by Sister Tewson. Sister Joyce Chater and Sister Joyce Morison proved to be the most knowledgeable.

We were pleased to have a visit from Elder Hadfield on August 17. We held a backwards progressive dinner on this day, which began at the old Ramah, moved to the Cape Town sisters' flat, and ended with square dancing at the new chapel.

There has been a general complaint of stiffness after the picnic at Little Falls on Monday, September 8.

The Primary Mothers, Sister MacAdam, Sister Morison and Sister Ferreira, put on a well-prepared evening program on September 15. Brother Muir gave an excellent address, and the Ramah quartet sang.

News has been received that Brother and Sister Ken Muir have been sealed in the temple and are now happily settled in Canada.

Sister Gloria Cahill has undergone an operation and we pray that she will have a speedy recovery.

We welcome Brother Kelvin Donley back from his adventurous canoe trip down the Zambesi. Sister Buckley has visited us from Durban.

BULAWAYO BRANCH

Meetings: Boy Scout Headquarters, 8th Ave., off Lobangula Street. Opposite Bulawayo Young Men's Club.
Branch President: Elder H. D. Boucher; phone 5922
Branch Reporter: Marjorie Paterson.

The last month has been a very happy one for the Bulawayo Branch. We have had several visitors. President and Sister Fisher attended our branch conference. Sister Nolte called in from Shangani and Brother Jubber visited from Bala Bala.

Branch conference was held on Sunday, September 8. The theme was "the Home and the Church". Among our visitors was Sister Thwait from Victoria Falls who is resting in Bulawayo after giving birth to a lovely baby girl.

Saturday night, before the conference, we held a social for President and Sister Fisher and the members of the branch.

Elder Boucher spent a few days in bed with malaria, but is quite well again.

We are happy to see that Sister Rheeder is out of the hospital.

Our congratulations go to Peter Gartside who was ordained a deacon by President Fisher.

BLOEMFONTEIN BRANCH

Meetings: Red Cross Building, Alexander Ave.
Branch President: S. J. Spear; phone 6819
Branch Reporter: Mona Spear.

The Bloemrontein Branch is continuing in its activities. The members of the branch are still striving to increase interest and activity among more of the members. The sisters in the Relief Society are looking forward to the new lessons that they will be starting soon.

We are pleased to have Elder Grant Beazer and Elder Andre Naude working with us. They are very enthusiastic. We enjoy their company and hope they will be around for some time.

Sister Milne has succumbed to a cold and had to spend some time in bed.

The Harry Spear's are pleased to have their little David back with them after he had spent some time in the hospital. He is quite well again, which is an answer to the prayers of the branch.

DURBAN BRANCH

Meetings: 144 Silverton Road, Durban. Phone 49369
Branch President: J. M. Jakins; phone 44347.
Branch Reporter: Joyce Wahlburn.

On September 14 a variety concert was presented in the Norwegian Hall to help with the building fund. The excellent talent provided grand entertainment for the packed house that turned out to see it.

The building fund also benefitted from a cake sale held on September 20.

A lovely spot near Umkomaas was the place chosen by a group of MIA members for a camping site over the recent long weekend.

We warmly welcome to the branch Sister Fiona Milns, Sister Myrtle Volker and Brother Herbert Volker, who were baptized on September 22

Our congratulations go to Brother and Sister McLellan and Brother and Sister Fisher, whose baby daughters arrived early this month.

We would like to ask the members in the mission to remember Sheridan Jakins in their prayers. He has been released from the hospital but the doctors say that only faith and prayer can restore the use of his leg. We will miss the Jakins family when they move to Harrismith at the end of this month.

SALISBURY BRANCH

Meetings: Queen Elizabeth School, Music Hall, Moffat Street, Salisbury.
Branch President: Elder L. E. Dahl; phone 44936.
Branch Reporter: Mary Maxwell.

President and Sister Fisher arrived on August 31 and the branch had a gathering that evening at the home of Sister Schonneberg.

On Sunday, September 1, two sections of the branch conference were held, with excellent attendance. There were 46 present at the morning meeting. The theme was "the Home.

We welcome Peter Houghton and Patrick McCour to the Church. They were baptized and confirmed on September 22.

SPRINGS BRANCH

Meetings: 23 Eleventh Street, Springs.
Branch President: H. deC. Hugo; phone 56-5098.
Branch Reporter: N. C. van Niekerk.

Branch conference was held on August 25. The theme was "Gratitude". Talks were given by District President Louw, Brother Johann Brummer, Brother Danie Paterson, Brother William Balmer and Brother Ken Armstrong. The elders quartet sang a selection.

A surprise birthday party for Sister Eunice Somerset took the form of a braaivleis and singsong at the home of Brother Troskie. Brother William Balmer and Brother Ken Armstrong led the singing and Brother Doug Hulbert supplied the music with his piano accordion.

District President I. C. Louw, with his wife, toured and visited several out-of-branch members. Brother Louw reports that many of these members remain faithful even though they seldom get a chance to attend meetings.

Brother and Sister Paul Botha and all of their children went down with Asian 'flu this month, but they are well now.

Brother Ronald Louw also spent some time in bed, but is his cheery self again.

A new arrival in our branch is the baby son born to Sister Genevieve Tyler on August 29.

We welcome back to the branch Brother and Sister Gearge Hutton from Vereeniging, who have been transferred back to springs.

Best wishes go to sister Dhawne, daughter of Brother and Sister N. C. van Niekerk, on her engagement to Mr. Neil Wentzel of Stutterheim. The happy event took place on September 14.

There is every hope in our branch of having the new organ installed soon. The organ fund is showing encouraging progression.

PORT ELIZABETH BRANCH

Meetings: 40 Prospect Road, Walmer.
Branch President: C. R. Doller; phone 7620.
Branch Reporter: Madge McHugh.

The Priesthood holders in the branch have been spending spare time fixing up the grass and grounds of the chapel.

The Relief Society have changed their meeting day to Saturday afternoon and we have found this a big improvement. Attendance has increased. Mutual is now held on Friday nights, and Priesthod meeting is held just after Sunday School. These changes have all helped.

The Asian 'flu has taken its course with most of the members and missionaries.

We welcome Brother and Sister Griffith, Snr. back to Port Elizabeth from Worcester.

PIETERMARITZBURG BRANCH

Meetings: Oddfellows Hall, 136 Longmarket Street (just above Chapel Street)
Branch President: R. R. Morrissey; phone 29040
Branch Reporter: Joyce Morrissey.

On September 1 we moved to our new hall and held a branch conference. Elder Butler and Elder Fisher were visiting from Durban. There were talks and some lovely musical numbers.

On September 2 a few members of the branch went down to the coast for a picnic. We met Brother and Sister van Coller and some of the Durban elders

Our MIA meetings have been very successful. Several non-members have attended and seem to enjoy the meetings .

A successful cake sale was held this month again.

There has been no illness in the branch and things have been progressing favourably with the new hall.

PRETORIA BRANCH

Meetings: Sanlam Building, corner of Andries and Pretorius Streets.
Branch President: Lionel Bibb.
Branch Reporter: Patricia Harvey.

September 1 was an eventful Sunday. Priscilla Ann France-Brotherton was blessed; Sister Winnifred Cooksley left for Rhodesia to spend a holiday with her daughter, Sister Joyce Jones; the evening service was under the auspices of Genealogical Society. A very interesting programme was presented with talks by Brother van Staden and Elder Nelson.

We were very pleased to have Sister Mavis Louw at our Relief Society meeting on September 17.

MIA on September 19 took the form of a Beetle Drive. Several people attended and spent an enjoyable evening.

Sister Christine Rautenbach has announced her engagement to Mr. Charl du Plessis.

There have been a few cases of Asian 'flu among the Smith and Bibb families and Sister Faber has also been on the sick list .

BENONI BRANCH

Meetings: Masonic Hall, Amphill Ave., Benoni.
Branch President: J. H. Adendorff.
Branch Reporter: Ann Coetzee.

We are sorry to report that Brother Brummer has had to go to hospital once more. His condition is improving slowly.

Brother Bert Adendorff is recovering from a minor operation.

The East Rand elders, under the direction of Elder K. H. Salmon, arranged a lovely programme for the evening service on September 15. The musical numbers by the elders were lovely indeed. We were also pleasantly surprised by the attendance of the Brakpan members. After the service we had a fire-side.

LUANSHYA BRANCH

Meetings: 121 "F" Avenue, Luanshya.
Branch President: Douglas Charley.
Branch Reporter: Jeanne Charley.

Our best wishes go to Brother Ronald and Mrs. Roux on the birth of their bonny daughter.

We are glad to see Brother Philly Munch on his feet again after a bout of illness.

Our congratulations go to Sister Gertruida Fourie on her several successes at the recent flower show.

MOWBRAY BRANCH

Meetings: "Cumorah", Main and Grove Roads, Mowbray.
Branch President: Alwin Hubert; phone 45275
Branch Reporter: Beatrice E. Smith.

We extend our sincere sympathy to Sister Antoinetta Macfarlane on the death of her mother. Sister Macfarlane has been in hospital for an emergency operation but is recovering rapidly.

Sister Lilian Brown has been suffering with an injury to her back.

Sister Esme Pietersen, Sister Esme van Rooyen and Sister Petronella Cullen have also been on the sick list. We hope they have recovered.

Brother Clyde Geldenhuys has returned to the branch from Kimberley.

On August 29 the Relief Society held a get-together with the Bellville Relief Society. It was good to have these visitors at "Cumorah." Refreshments were served and a pleasant evening enjoyed.

On August 30 the Relief Society staged a Beetle Drive. An amount of over £8 was raised to be used for expenses in connection with the Bazaar.

After many days of hard work the Primary collected a good pile of rummage and held a sale on Saturday, August 31. Their efforts were well rewarded.

The Genealogical Society presented the Sunday evening programme on Septmeber 1. Talks were given by Sister Zoraida Williams and Sister Edith Wiid.

"Cumorhah's" popular Gold and Green Ball was held on September 20. Johnny Hooper's orchester supplied the music. The ball was a fairyland of gold and green streamers, with a circle of coloured lights. An old-fashioned minuet was danced for the floor show.

A happy evening was arranged by the friends of Brother and Sister Bobby Smith on September 13, when a house-warming was held in their new home. The host and hostess were surprised as several groups descended on them, each bearing part of the refreshments. President Fisher dedicated the new home.

NORTH WESTERN BRANCH

Branch Reporter: J. H. Wagener.

A record attendance for the month of September was reached on Sunday the 22nd, when we had the pleasure of extending a welcome to the District Presidency, Sister Louw and her two children together with four Elders.

A very inspiring meeting under the direction of the Genealogy section ably conducted by Sister Aletta Brummer was held on Sunday 1st September.

Sister Virginia Schafer who met with a slight motor accident is progressing nicely, and we hope that with the Lord's held she will be with us again shortly.

Congratulations to Sister and Brother Seemen on the ordination of their son John (Jackie) Seemen to the Aaronic Priesthood as a Deacon.

OBITUARY

The pioneer ranks of the South African Mission were once again thinned with the passing of Elder Edwin J. Jakins of the Bellville Branch. He was 87 years of age.

Brother Jakins' cheery disposition and unbounded energy were well-known throughout the mission, which he had faithfully served since his baptism in 1931. Perhaps his greatest contribution to the mission is a large family of active and enthusiatic latter-day saints.

We extend our sympathy to those who mourn his death. We pray that they might share our conviction that Brother Jakins will be richly rewarded for his enthusiatic work

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